

See page 2 for new Boardman Numbers for games LXXIV - LXXVIII.

GRAUSTARK

#391 1976EG, 1977B, 1977CH, 1977HT, 1977IH, 1977KE, 1977KF, 1977AV, 23 December 1978
1978AT, LXXIV, LXXV, LXXVI, LXXVII, LXXVIII

1977CH "Fall 1911"

ITALIANS COUNTERATTACK IN BALKANS

ENGLAND (Chafetz): A Liv-Yor; F Nth-Long; F Hel-Hol; A Hol-Bel; A Pic-Bre.

FRANCE (Verheiden): A Bur-Par; A Tyr-Vie; F Mar-Pie; F NAf-Tun; F Lyo-Tyr; F Wes S F NAf-Tun.

ITALY (Brawner): A Pie-Tyr; F Tyr-Wes; F Tun-Wes; F Ion-Aeg; F Tus-Lyo; A Tri-Bud; A Ser-Rum; F Bul(s.c.)-Con; F Smy-Con.

RUSSIA (Salcedo): F Eng-Bre; A Edi, A Nwy, F Den & A Kie hold; F Nrg S A Edi; F Ska S F Den; F Bal S A Kie; A Boh S FRENCH: A Tyr-Vie; A Rum-Bud; A Gal S A Rum-Bud; F Bla-Rum; A Ank-Smy.

Underlined moves are not possible. The High Combatant Powers now control the following supply centers:

ENGLAND: Bel, Hol, Liv, Lon. (4)

FRANCE: Mar, Mun, Par, Por, Spa, Vie. (6)

ITALY: Bul, Con, Gre, Nap, Rom, Ser, Smy, Tri, Tun, Ven. (10)

RUSSIA: Ank, Ber, Bre, Bud, Den, Edi, Kie, Mos, Nwy, Rum, St.P, Sev, Swe, War. (14)

Italy and Russia may each build one new unit, and England must remove one unit. The deadline for theee "Winter 1911" moves is NOON, SATURDAY 13 JANUARY 1979.

A vote has been asked for a concession to Russia. Players should send in their votes with the "Winter 1911" moves.

Jack Brawner, #30, 215 Hayden Road, Tallahassee, Florida 32304 - This is a new new address; a phone number will be sent later. Until 7 January, Eric Verheiden will be at 3245 S. W. 185th Ave., Aloha, Ore. 97005

Another change of address is:

Steve Bobker, 804 90th St., North Bergen, N. J. 07047 (effective 12 January 1979; phone number remains 201-868-3281). For a temporary change of address for Tom Ripper, see the report of 1977B on p. 8.

1977KE "Fall 1907"

ENGLISH UNDERDOG SHOWS BULLDOG PEDIGREE

Following "Spring 1907" moves England retreated A Bur-Pic.

ENGLAND (Trangsrud): A St.P holds; F Mar holds; F Nrg-Nwy; F Nth-Den; F Ska-Swe; A Hol-Kie; F Hel S A Hol-Kie; A Ruh S A Hol-Kie; A Pic-Bel; F Gas-Mid; F Mid-Spa(s.c.); F Lyo S F Mar.

GERMANY (Gray): A Liv-St.P; A Mos S A Liv-St.P; A Arm S TURKISH F Con-Ank; A Rum S A Bul; A Bul S A Bud-Ser; A Tri S A Bud-Ser; A Bud-Ser; A Pie-Tue; A Ven-Apu; A Mun-Ruh; A Bur S A Mun-Ruh; A Kie-Den; A Sil-Mun; F Den-Swe; F Bal S F Den-Swe.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Bobker): A Ser-Rum; A Gre-Bul.

TURKEY (Hunt): F Con-Ank; A Smy-Ank; F Wes holde; F Rom-Tyr; F Nap-Tyr.

Underlined moves are not possible. The following retreats take place:

ENGLAND: A St.P-Fin; A Ruh-Hol.

GERMANY: A Kie-Ber.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY: A Ser-Alb.

The High Combatant Powere now control the following supply centers:

ENGLAND: Bel, Bre, Edi, Hol, Kie, Liv, Lon, Mar, Nwy, Par, Por, Spa. (12)

GERMANY: Ber, Bud, Bul, Con, Den, Mos, Mun, Rum, St.P, Ser, Sev, Swe, Tri, Ven, Vie, War. (16)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY: Gre. (1)

TURKEY: Ank, Nap, Rom, Smy, Tun. (5)

Austria-Hungary has one removal, which must be sent by IMMEDIATE RETURN MAIL, so that it arrives by TUESDAY 2 JANUARY 1979. If England or Germany should choose to remove a dislodged unit, they may build one new unit for each one removed; these moves, if any, must also come in by IMMEDIATE RETURN MAIL. The deadline for "Spring 1908" moves is NOON, SATURDAY 13 JANUARY 1979.

AT LAST - NEW BOARDMAN NUMBERS

Bernadette and Dennis Agosta have finally taken over the wreckage which the lazy, irresponsible Cal White left of the Boardman Number assignments, and are heroically trying to put some order into this system of designation of postal Diplomacy games. They have published a combined issue of Everything #40/41 on which White was sitting, and have sent Boardman Numbers for the games which began in GRAUSTARK since White went into hibernation. They are:

LXXIV.....1978CN

LXXVII.....1978ID

LXXV.....1978FF

LXXVIII.....1978IE

LXXVI.....1978HW

For the next couple of issues of GRAUSTARK, these two designations for each game will be used in tandem, so that players may get used to the Boardman numbers. Eventually, only the above-mentioned Boardman Numbers will be used for these games.

The Agostas' address is 14 Shadyside Ave., Dumont, N. J. 07628. Gamesmasters who need Boardman Numbers should contact them.

GAME LXXIV

"Winter 1904"

There were a couple of errors in the "Fall 1904" adjudications. The German "A Kie-Mun" should have been underlined as unsuccessful. Russia holds Munich, and has two builds rather than one. The German A Kie was annihilated by the Russian attack.

ENGLAND (McDonald): Builds F Lon.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (R. Gallagher): Builds

GERMANY (Dodge): Removes A Ruh.

F Tri, A Vie.

ITALY (Lariton): Removes A Rom.

RUSSIA (Milligan): Builds A Mos, A Sev.

The deadline for "Spring 1905" moves is NOON, SATURDAY 13 JANUARY 1979.

MOSCOW (SNS): "TOLD YOU SO", says Prescient Tsar -- Tsar Nicholas II of all the Russias and most of the Germanies declared today that he was right all along when he predicted a German invasion of Russia four years ago.

Claiming the presence of a German army in Warsaw proved his point without a shadow of a doubt, the Tsar stated that it was precisely because of the expectation of invasions such as this that Russian troops launched a "pre-emptive occupation" of the German empire (sic) in 1900. In other news, hundreds were believed drowned when a German and Russian fleet collided in the fog as both attempted to enter the port of Oslo at the same time. Amid the groans and screeches of crunching metal could be heard cries of "Red on right returning!", "Sailing ships have the right of way!" (this from the Russian flagship), and "I thought you brought the life jackets!" as several dreadnaughts went to the bottom of Oslo Harbor.

((Earlier press releases appear on p. 7.))

GAME LXXVII - LATE PRESS RELEASE

VIENNA: The Austro-Hungarian government regrets its failure to properly maintain diplomatic communications in recent weeks. It further regrets that its impending move and an overload of work and school will continue for several more weeks. During that time all treaties will be honored but few letters written or replied to. Please stay tuned.

GAME LXXVI - PRESS RELEASE

BERLIN: The Kaiser expressed concern over the recent induction of Polish peasants into the Russian Army. It seems the Czar has seen fit to bring war and destruction into the provinces of Easter Germany.

It is rumored that this is a result of Turkish influence with the Russian court. It seems the Sultan informed the Czar that he couldn't have his Bavarian beer and his opium too. He had to choose one or the other.

The 4th Army has been dispatched to Silesia to check out the rumore of Polish resistance to the new draft and intensified shipbuilding in St. Petersburg. If the rumors prove false, and the Czar's intentions are indeed peaceful, then the Kaiser offers his apologies and will immediately withdraw his forces to the capital.

1977KF

GANG MUGS KING-EMPEROR IN BALKANS

"Fall 1907"

Following "Spring 1907" moves Russia retreated A War-Ukr. All players were told.

ENGLAND (Engel): A Kie S F Ber; F Ber S A Kie; F Hol-Bel; F Nth & F Eng S F Hol-Bel; F Iri-Mid; F Cly-NAt; F Nwy-St.P(n.c.); F Bot S F Nwy-St.P(n.c.).

FRANCE (Daly): F Spa(s.c.)-Mid; F Tyr-Tun; F Alb-Gre; F Ion S F Alb-Gre; F Aeg S TURKISH A Con-Bul; A Tri-Ser; A Bur-Bel; A Pic S A Bur-Bel; A Ven-Tyr; A Tyr-Mun; A Mun-Ruh.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Drakert): A War S A Mos; A Mos S RUSSIAN A St.P; A Vie-Bud; A Boh-Sil; A Bul-Rum; A Ser S A Bul-Rum; F Rum-Sev; A Gre-Bul.

RUSSIA (McElvaney): A St.P holds; A Ukr-Rum.

TURKEY (R. Gallagher): A Arm-Sev; A Con-Bul; A Tun-NAf; F Bla S RUSSIAN A Ukr-Rum.

Underlined moves are not possible. The Austro-Hungarian A Gre, A Bul- & F Rum are dislodged and annihilated. The High Combatant Powers now control the following supply centers:

ENGLAND: Bel, Ber, Den, Edi, Hol, Kie, Liv, AUSTRIA-HUNGARY: Bud, Mos, Ser, Sev, Vie, Lon, Nwy, Swe. (10) War. (6)

FRANCE: Bre, Gre, Mar, Mun, Nap, Par, Por, RUSSIA: Rum, St.P. (2)

Rom, Spa, Tri, Tun, Vea. (12) TURKEY: Ank, Bul, Con, Smy. (4)

England, France, and Austria-Hungary each have 1 build. These builds should be sent to the Gamesmaster by IMMEDIATE RETURN MAIL so that they arrive by Tuesday 2 January 1979. The deadline for "Spring 1908" moves is NOON, SATURDAY 13 JANUARY 1979.

1976EG

"FULL OF SOUND AND FURY, SIGNIFYING NOTHING"

"Fall 1914"

Following "Spring 1914" moves, Germany retreated F Nwy-Swe.

FRANCE (Burns): F Nth, F Hel, A Hol, A Ruh & A Bur hold; F Nwy-holds; F Eng-Mid; F Mid-NAf; F Spa(s.c.)-Wes; A Bel S A Ruh.

GERMANY (Nalay): A Mos & A Bud hold; A St.P-Nwy; F Swe S A St.P-Nwy; F Den-Ska; A Ber-Kie; A Kie-Den; A Mun S A Ber-Kie; A Boh S A Mun.

ITALY (Rene La Pointe): F Con-Smy; F Bul-Con; F Gre-Bul(s.c.); A Ser S F Gre-Bul(s.c.); F Ion-Gre; A Tyr & A Tri hold; A Ven S A Tyr.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Verheiden): A War S GERMAN A Mos.

RUSSIA (Chafetz): A Ank-Smy; A Sev-Mos; A Ukr S A Sev-Mos; A Rum-Bud.

Underlined moves are not possible. France must retreat F Nwy-Nrg or -Bar or remove the unit. The direction of this retreat should be sent in with the "Winter 1914" moves, which may be made conditional upon it. The High Combatant Powers control the same supply centers that they did after "1913" except that Italy has taken Bulgaria from Russia. (See GRAUSTARK #389.) Italy may build two new units and Germany may build one; France also has a build if the dislodged fleet was removed. Russia must remove one unit. The deadline for these "Winter 1914" moves is NOON, SATURDAY 13 JANUARY 1979. See p. 1 for Eric Verheiden's temporary change of address.

PARIS: France hereby serves due legal notice on Italy to the effect that French forces will enter the 'Neutral Zone' to protect French interests.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY

Jerry Jones, whose lack of Gamesmasterly qualifications were shown in the last issue of GRAUSTARK, wrote a letter complaining about the way I pointed out his difficulty in expressing himself according to generally accepted rules of English grammar and spelling. Unfortunately, the letter was delayed. Jones had put the wrong address on it!

Meanwhile, a rumor is floating around here that Jones will be taking over the publication of Diplomacy World, now that somebody at Avalon-Hill has finally read the thing and consequently cut off the subsidy. Jerry Jones and Diplomacy World - there's a combination that deserves one another.

1977IH

"Fall 1908"

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FAST SHUFFLE ON THE MERSEY

ENGLAND (Burns): F Nwy-Swe.

GERMANY (Remmeli): F Iri-Mid; F Eng S F Iri-Mid; F Bel-Nth; F Nth-Lon; A Mos-St.P; A Ukr-Mos; A Gal S A Boh; A Boh S A Gal; A Sil S A Mun; A Mun S A Kie-Ruh; A Kie-Ruh; A Ruh-Bel; F Den-Swe.

ITALY (Smith): F Wes-Mid; F NAT S F Wes-Mid; F Wal-Liv; A Pic-Bre; A Bur holds; A Mar S A Bur; A Pie-Tyr; A Ven S A Pie-Tyr; A Tyr-Boh; A Vie S A Tyr-Boh; A Bud S A Vie; A Ser S A Bud; F Ion S F Gre; F Gre not ordered, holds.

TURKEY (Beardaley): F Bla & A Sev S A Rum; A Arm S A Sev; F Bul(s.c.) holds; A Rum S F Bul(s.c.); F Aeg-Eas.

Underlined moves are not possible. The High Combatant Powers control the same supply centers that they did after "1907" except that Italy has taken Liverpool from Germany. (See GRAUSTARK #389.) Italy has one build and Germany has one removal. These "Winter 1908" moves should be sent in by IMMEDIATE RETURN MAIL, so that they arrive by TUESDAY 2 JANUARY 1979. The deadline for "Spring 1909" moves is NOON, SATURDAY 13 JANUARY 1979.

OSLO: "I'm still here, Hitler." - signed, the Norwegian Navy.

1977AV

"Fall 1906"

RUSSIANS GET - AND NEED - REINFORCEMENTS

ENGLAND (Michal): F Eng-Mid; F Bar-St.P(n.c.); F Nwy S GERMAN F Nth-Ska; A Bre-Gas; F Spa(s.c.) S F Eng-Mid.

FRANCE (Rene La Pointe): F Por holds.

GERMANY (Lariton): F Nth-Ska; A Swe S ENGLISH F Nwy; A Den S A Swe; A Ber-Pru; A Sil S A Ber-Pru; A Mun-Tyr; A Mar-Pie; A Gas-Mar; A Par holds.

ITALY (Compton): A Tyr-Tri; A Ven S A Tyr-Tri.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Van Alkemade): A Gal S RUSSIAN A Ukr-War; A Tri-Tyr; A Vie S A Tri-Tyr; A Alb-Tri.

RUSSIA (Hedbavny): A Pru S AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN A Gal-Sil; A Ukr-War; F Ska-Nwy; A Fin-St.P; A Rum-Ser.

TURKEY (Remmeli): F Ion-Adr; F Aeg-Ion; F Tyr-Tun; F Rom & A Con hold; A Bul & A Gre S RUSSIAN A Rum-Ser.

Underlined moves are not possible. The Russian F Ska is annihilated, and Russia retreats A Pru-Liv or removes it. The High Combatant Powers now control the following supply centers:

ENGLAND: Bre, Edi, Liv, Lon, Nwy, Spa. (6)

ITALY: Ven. (1)

FRANCE: Por. (1)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY: Bud, Tri, Vie. (3)

GERMANY: Bel, Ber, Den, Hol, Kie, Mun, Par, Mar, Swe. (9)

RUSSIA: Mos, Rum, St.P, Ser, Sev, War. (6)

TURKEY: Ank, Bul, Con, Gre, Nap, Rom,

Swy, Tun. (8)

Russia may build two new units, or three if the dislodged army was removed. Turkey and England each have one build, and Austria-Hungary and Italy each have one removal. The deadline for these "Winter 1906" moves is NOON, SATURDAY 13 JANUARY 1979.

1978AT

"Fall 1905"

ITALIANS WIN BATTLE - LOSE NAPLES?

ENGLAND (Salcedo): F Den-Swe.

FRANCE (Frost): F Mid-NAT; F Liv-Cly; F Spa(s.c.)-Mid; F Eng S A Bel; A Lon holds; A Bel S RUSSIAN F Nth-Hol; A Ruh-Mun; A Bur S A Ruh-Mun.

GERMANY (Chafetz): A Kie-Den; A Hol-Kie; F Hel S A Kie-Den.

ITALY (Katz): F Tyr-Ion; F Tun S F Tyr-Ion; F Nap-Apu; A Ven-Tyr; A Mun S A Ven-Tyr.

"YOU KNOW..."

The printed word seems to be downgraded these days. An ability to extract the sense from a printed passage, or to express one's own views coherently in writing, is lacking in many people. I find it frequently at the college where I teach. The most common reason for a student getting a problem wrong is - not reading it properly. And there is a reluctance to accept the meaning of a written passage. On a recent examination, several students worked out a problem as if the words "vertically above" meant "north of". Furthermore, they tried to persuade me that "vertically above" really does mean "north of"!

This inability extends even to verbal communication, for which standards have traditionally been less rigid than for the written word. Someone trying to assemble an idea verbally will stop, often in mid-thought, and say, "You know." This is a confession of the person's inability to complete the statement coherently, coupled with the hope that his or her listener has already grasped the idea and thus obviate further mental groping.

This same attitude seems to have implanted itself in postal war-gaming. I had some comments about this in GRAUSTARK #390, as many players and even Gamesmasters seem unable to interpret the rules of Diplomacy and other war games.

Buddy Tretick's apparent illiteracy is one (but only one) of the reasons why he is no longer welcome in postal Diplomacy. He has maintained for several years that the rules of Diplomacy, as revised in 1971, contain contradictions and illogical outcomes. Once he sent me a position and actually asked me to adjudicate it without regard to the rules. This statement is self-contradictory, like many other things about Tretick. A game is played by rules. So long as the rules contain no self-contradictions, they have to be used in adjudications. If you don't use the rules, you are playing some other game by rules of your own.

Tretick carries this attitude into practice under the pseudonym "Oaklyn" in Le Front de Liberation du Diplomacy V. 2, #2. He says that even though Russia did not order "F Bot-Swe" in a recent game, the Gamesmaster should have allowed it. Apparently Gamesmasters are now supposed to read their players' minds, and order not the moves they sent in, but the moves that they "should", by some determination of the Gamesmaster's, have sent in. Indeed, some Gamesmasters will write their own moves for a player if he doesn't get them in on time!

This last "service" is apparently performed out of a misguided notion that it is a Gamesmaster's business to provide "balance" to a game. I can see it now: in "Fall 1902" a Russian army, with three supports from Russia and an Italian ally, marches into Budapest - whereupon the Gamesmaster disallows it on the grounds that it will cut Austria-Hungary back to one supply center after only 2 game years, thus "unbalancing" the game. This may sound stupid, and is, but you'll see it if "balance" becomes a concern of Gamesmasters.

As I reported in #390, Jerry Jones of Lies, Deceit, and Nefarious Schemes has sent a questionnaire out to Gamesmasters, asking their advice on a number of adjudications which he considers dubious and not covered by the rules. They are in fact covered by the rules; in fact, most of the cases submitted by Jones can be covered under the following provisions of Rule VII.4: "An illegal order is not followed...A mistaken order, if legal, must be followed. An order which admits of two meanings is not followed. A badly written order, which nevertheless can have only one meaning, must be followed."

One of the "dubious" cases cited by Jones was: "F Spa(s.e.)-Por; A Por-Spa". There cannot be the slightest doubt to any literate person that both these moves fail. The operative words are in the third sentence in Rule VIII: "If two units are ordered, each to the space the other occupies, neither may move." It therefore follows that anyone who would judge these moves as successful is not competent to read the rules, and thus not competent to be a postal Diplomacy Gamesmaster.

Jones seems to think that a majority, or even a large minority, of opinion should be allowed to overrule the printed rules of Diplomacy. "Most of the moves" (presumably he means opinions rather than moves) "were split down the middle as to whether or not the moves would succeed." (In the same letter he spells "cited" as "sited", and appears to believe that the plural of "weakness" is "weakness's".) So anyone who wants to try

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the services of a Gamesmaster with whom he or she is unfamiliar ought to ask a few questions first. Let me suggest these:

1. How would you adjudicate the moves "F Spa(s.c.)-Por; A Por-Spa" if neither unit were supported?

2. If England ordered "F Lon-Nth; F Edi-Nth; A Liv-Yor" in "Spring 1901" would you allow only the last move?

3. If you receive no orders from a player, will you make up orders of your own and use them as if the player had submitted them?

Any Gamesmaster who would allow the moves in Question 1, the first two moves in Question 2, or answer "Yes" to Question 3 is clearly an incompetent.

According to a letter from Jones (6 errors of spelling, 2 each of grammar and syntax, and one as well in punctuation) the questionnaire was inspired by a proposal for a set of universal rules for postal Diplomacy. This is not needed. A set of universal rules for Diplomacy already exists. It was written in 1971 by Allan B. Calhamer and may be found in any Diplomacy set. Of course a few modifications of procedure for postal play have to be made, but these are not changes in the actual rules, which are quite adequate for any situation I have ever seen come up over a Diplomacy board in the past eight years.

Anyone who has much to do with amateur literary efforts or student writing is well acquainted with the problems illustrated by Tretick's and Jones's claims. New York University has recently instituted a required course in creative writing, in an attempt to improve standards of composition. The results thus far were reported in the New York Times of 16 January 1979. One student's objections were quoted, but these objections show how badly the program is needed. His exact words were: "I am presently enrolled in the class and outraged by its lacking characteristics," and "The English division should be run on similar lines as the foreign languages departments."

My case rests.

GETTING CAUGHT UP ON PRESS RELEASES

1977B

BERLIN: Rumor has it that peace will once again come to the known world. It should be only a matter of a year or less until the infids will be wiped off the face of the earth. Dachshund-yorkie cross, which were being offered at sale prices just last year, are now being offered on the black market at a 200% mark-up. Lucky are those who believed that a 17-17 draw could become a reality and stocked up. I've got one, do you?

CONSTANTINOPLE (TYPs): The Sultan proposes a concession to Turkey. In order to seduce the French and German Governments into accepting this proposal, the Sultan offers to:

1. Divide his Harem equally (almost) between the populations of Berlin and Paris;
2. Make enough opium available to Kaiser and M. le President to put all their armies and navies into permanent bliss;
3. Send the French Correspondents' testicles back to Paris along with their long lost heads;
4. Raise the sunken yacht with its load of German Correspondents from the bottom of the Black Sea, in order to give the drowning victims a decent, Christian burial at sea;
5. Sever all Turkish Diplomatic relations with Paraguay, Belize, the Central African Empire, Idi-Aminland and Togo.

An official holiday already has been set to celebrate the smashing Turkish victory, as it is a forgone conclusion that France and Germany have no choice but to accept the Sultan's most generous offer.

DRZUNKDUMP, PUNDSCHDRUK (URRP): The inhabitants of the Kingdom of Pundschedruk, the youngest of the Four And A Half Kingdoms, are of Turco-Altaic stock. (They are also of Slavic, Germanic, Hunnish, Finnish, Scythian, and Ossetian stock, owing to certain customs of nomad hospitality in vogue during their centuries as wanderers.) As such, the Kingdom of Pundschedruk has expressed its support of the Turkish peace offer, and has also offered concessions to the French and Germans, "particularly," according to the Prime Minister, "the frankfurter concession in front of the Royal Palace."

1976IB.

"Winter 1910"

ENGLAND (Brawner): Builds F Lon.
FRANCE (P. Gallagher): Removes F Por,
F Spa(s.c.).

ITALY (Thornsen): Builds F Nap, A Ven.
RUSSIA (Walters): Builds A Mos, A War.

The deadline for "Spring 1911" moves is NOON, SATURDAY 19 AUGUST 1978. The vote for a concession to Italy fails.

LONDON (WartI): Admiral Bone, conqueror of Brest, has been given the most coveted award in England - the British Order of the Bath. In this war-modified honor (and privilege), the Admiral (and his entire fleet) have been permitted to bathe for the first time in five years. All of England is begging now to join the military. Watch out, world!

PARIS (Dec., 1910): Emperor Jean Paul Gallachais today denounced the leaders of Russia and England as being "a couple of pussies" in light of their recent failure to check the imperialistic Italian expansion, and of the continuance of their irrational and unjust barrage directed towards France. Since by their cowardly actions, the morally deficient governments of Russia and England have assured the inevitability of Italian victory, Gallachais has ordered the removal of two Mediterranean fleets, in effect relinquishing control of the Iberian provinces and hastening the erection of world papal dominancy, so as to hereby direct the bulk of all forthcoming military operations towards the two aforementioned powers.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY

Despite the alleged settlement a week ago, there still seems to be a lot of talk about a wildcat postal strike in at least the New York City region. If this happens, it seems unlikely to affect the mailing of this issue of GRAUSTARK. But if a postal strike takes place, all pending deadlines in GRAUSTARK will be automatically postponed until the fourth Saturday after the resumption of postal service.

The new game mentioned on p. 8 is an exception. If a postal strike takes place between now and 19 August, the "Spring 1901" moves will be due in the second issue of GRAUSTARK to be published after the resumption of postal "service". This is

If there is a postal strike in a foreign country in which a GRAUSTARK player lives, then play in that game will be suspended until after the strike.

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Bruce Milligan, an Avalon-Hill employee and GRAUSTARK player, has just sent a copy of his firm's new "The Gamer's Guide to Diplomacy". This booklet sells for \$3.00 plus 50¢ postage from Avalon-Hill, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, Md. 21214.

The book is written by Rodney C. Walker, the court jester of postal Diplomacy fandom's early days. He is identified as "having specialized in the foreign relations and diplomatic history of the United States and the Soviet Union", a statement which will bring gales of laughter to the people who remember the things he was writing on this topic in the letter column of GRAUSTARK. # 876

Walker's discussion on postal Diplomacy begins with the statement that the first GRAUSTARK game had six players. In fact, it had five. The rest of his remarks have a comparable accuracy. But at least he has given up the totally fallacious claim that Conrad von Metzke, or Matzike, independently invented postal play of Diplomacy and in 1962 was publishing a 'zine called Mongo. Walker is a co-editor of Diplomacy World, a magazine which is subsidized by Avalon-Hill and thus part of the publisher's commercial operation. DW was founded by an Indiana lawyer named Walt Buchanan, who once mounted an utterly mendacious campaign to drive out of Diplomacy one of the hobby's most valuable and hard-working supporters, John J. Beshara. While Walter Buchanan is accepting his subsidy from Avalon-Hill, his wife Carol once said that GRAUSTARK was being run on a subsidy from Beshara. This, as anyone who knows the Buchanans could tell you, is a complete lie. Needless to say, neither Buchanan has ever apologized for it, and Walter now seems unable to remember what all the "fuss" was about. Once you start dealing with the Walker-Buchanan crew, you find that the line between truth and false-

O At
P Great
E Intervals
R This
A Appears
T To
I Inflame
O Optic
N Nerves

hood becomes untraceable to you and irrelevant to them.

Walker recommends his private creation (with the aid of the even more unreliable Larry Peery), the "International Diplomacy Association". (He does not say which of its several schisms he recommends.) Actually, as was reported in GRAUSTARK #350, the IDA's Board of Directors voted to disband IDA over two years ago. Presumably Walker is touting some rump group. (This makes sense, as Walker has a great liking for rumps.) Walker also gives information about the Boardman Numbers which is about six months out of date. There is now no one who is distributing Boardman Numbers. Cal White, who is supposed to be custodian, hasn't been heard from here since February.

Walker also gets into the thicket of "Rating Systems", which I haven't touched since an early attempt cited by him. And some discussion is given to a few of the more popular variants. The back cover is a 1958 draft of the Diplomacy board, which leaves one relieved that the game's designer Allan B. Calhamer simplified it to its present form.

There is quite a bit of material on how to play the game, including a sample contest. As you might expect, Walker endorses open cheating, as opposed to the back-stabs which are a routine part of the game. Pages 6-7 contain a number of his gloats on how to get away with it: For example, unobtrusively replacing a fleet with an army and then moving it inland, or hiding a second set of orders in a bowl of popcorn.

Saying so much, Walker must tell the truth some time. He explains why Italy is underestimated - a thing which all long-term GRAUSTARK players also know. Reasonably good opening strategies are given for the seven players. He even lists, with pictures (passé-up by Milligan) the rulers of the countries, although he maintains his crocket that King Edward VII of Great Britain ought to be "Edward X". And Walker finally admits, on p. 20, that a postal-and-telephone game played among players in the same geographic area is a game in good standing.

His illustrative game is GRAUSTARK's 1966AA, in which Walker (though he does not mention it) played Austria-Hungary. Unfortunately, this game was played under the 1961 rules, and some crucial developments in the last moves may therefore be mis-understood by players who use the present (1971) rules. A game played under these rules would have been a better illustration. And, possibly out of pique at the English player's moves, Walker in one place refers to him as "she" - a snide remark also directed at John Beshara during the vendetta against him.

But if you know how to read it, this booklet is well worth getting. It can be studied for strategy in alliances and for tactics in movement. And if you find too many mentions of Diplomacy World and IDA, remember that these are also part of A-H's commercial operation. Would you expect a dairy to sell milk, and oppose butter and cheese?

GRAUSTARK #384

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F I R S T C L A S S M A I L